

Fashion's New Terror—"The Blues"—Is Driving to Suicide or Asylum Women of the Smart Set Who Are Bluffing Along on Small Incomes.



By Margaret Hubbard Ayer

NEURASTHENIA is the fashionable disease of the day. It has superseded appendicitis and its results are more serious. Sanitariums in and outside of all the large cities are crowded with neurasthenic patients, whose trouble is ordinarily called "the blues."

Most of these patients are women. During the winter six prominent New York women committed suicide as a result of neurasthenia, brought on by the tremendous demands made on their nerve force through the fashionable life in which they played a brilliant part.

Dr. Albert Abrams, whose book called "The Blues" deals with this form of nerve disorder, ascribes the first symptoms of nerve exhaustion or neurasthenia to long continued over-fatigue of the body or mind.

The life of the fashionable or even near-fashionable woman of New York is enough to give any one nerve exhaustion, and it is no wonder that just at this time, with the changing weather making extra demands on her vitality, she flies to a sanitarium for something like rest for her tired and overwrought nerves.

Women suffering from neurasthenia or from the blues flock to Atlantic City and to other health resorts to escape from the round of social duties and worries which, in the form of pleasure, have driven them to the last limit of health.

The luxurious life and the series of

chief factors in filling the sanitariums with women neurasthenics. She of genuine social standing then, having answered her mail in as much of a hurry as the business woman answers hers, proceeds to the concerns of her pet charity. The pet charity is one of the prime causes of over-tiredness, mental worry and bodily disorders. The woman whose charity grows out of a real love for her kind is no more exempt from this than the social climber who starts the charity to boost herself into society.

Luncheon at 1 o'clock, partaken of not wisely but too well, is one more cause of nerve exhaustion, giving more food to the stomach than it can take care of, and again, according to Dr. Abrams, furnishing a further cause for the final breakdown.

In the afternoon there is the long business of dress ordering, exhausting fittings, controversies with milliners. During the day there are from five to six changes of costume, which, as any chorus girl would tell you, is a day's work in itself. But the woman caught in the big city's social whirl must needs smile a more ingenious smile than any

show girl who gets paid for it. Duty visits follow teas and receptions, where the noise of busy tongues, badly ventilated and overheated rooms form more links in the chain. The hurry necessary in one day to meet the engagements she has made for herself, and which are required to keep her ball rolling, give the society woman, and even the debutante, the exhausted and tired look beside which the average stenographer or clerk on

her homeward way in the evening looks comparatively fresh.

To be able to get through a long evening the society woman and the debutante, in some stimulant, be it tea, tobacco or alcohol, or all three, according to their principles. Their day is over somewhere about 2 o'clock, and a maid, less tired than her mistress, for she at least has had a nap, puts a nerve-exhausted woman to bed as the city is about to wake up.

The chase for excitement, for something new, for a sensation, fill the daily papers with the extraordinary doings of men and women of wealth. When monkey and lynch parties pall some fresh excitement must be furnished to satiate interests just as new dishes new drinks and stronger stimulants must be administered for jaded appetites.

Dr. Hamilton says that all neurasthenics eat too much, and the over-loaded stomach is but a foreshadowing of gout and dropsy, tears and innumerable distempers, of which the worst is the modern backache-neurasthenia, or melancholia, or just plain "the blues," from which the sad-eyed, weary-looking

and anointed woman of wealth tries to free herself from the top window of her room. Another one also young, beautiful and much admired, exhausted from the effort of mere living, succumbs to a drug administered at first only to keep them up for the day's round of pleasure. They live almost alone and forsaken, except for their servants, the victims of nerve exhaustion, which was intensified rather than cured. And in the mean time the sanitariums are filling up with women who let the excitement of social life drive them, without heeding the signs of danger, both to body and mind.

Reflections of a Bachelor Girl.

By Helen Rowland.

HUSBANDS are like the pictures in the anti-fat advertisements—so different before and after taking. There are moments when the meanest of women may feel a sisterly sympathy for her husband's first wife.

When a lawyer is slow about getting a pretty woman her divorce it is because he wants a chance to make love to her before she is in a position to start a breach of promise suit.

It isn't what you can see through the holes in a peek-a-boo waist that makes the garment attractive, but what you just can't.

A man who would turn up his nose at an overdone chop or an overdone biscuit will swallow an overdone compliment with the keenest relish.

Tobacco and love and olives are all acquired tastes; your first smoke makes you sick, your first olive tastes bitter, and your first love affair makes you unhappy.

Some men feel that the only thing they owe the woman who marries them is a grudge.

The supreme test of love is when a woman asks a man to let her take his new motor car out for a spin all by herself.

The Most Marvellous of Machines.

By Edward A. Avres.

THE human brain is the most marvellous machine in the world. It occupies less space in proportion to its capabilities than any machine it ever invented. It sends a special nerve to every ultimate fibre of some five hundred muscles, to many thousand branching twigs of arteries, to every pinhead area of the numerous glands which keeps the machine properly oiled, heated or cooled; to some sixteen square feet of skin, which is the outmost guard of its castle, with such completeness that the point of a pin cannot find an area unguarded. It possesses special quarters for the reception and translation of a constant stream of vibrations that are the product of all things movable or still in the outer world. On the retina of every open eye is a picture of the outer view, a focussed imprint of every ray of light and color; and in the visual chamber of the mental palace stands a vitroscope, a magic lantern that receives the retinal picture in its billion speeding series of light waves and throws them upon its mental screen as a living moving picture of light and shade and color. In the chamber of sound is a vibraphone, over whose active wires passes every wave of sound, from the dripping of the day to the orchestral fortissimo, from the raucous screech of the locomotive to the sighing of the wind through the meadow grass. In the chambers set apart for scent and taste and touch are the secret service guards to report upon the air and food which give sustenance to the palace and upon the solid qualities of the tactile world. And, wonder of all wonders, this complex human brain can think in all languages or in no language, and even conceive its own physical mortality.—Harper's Magazine.

Panhandle Pete Has a Polite Ride in the Subway

By Geo. McManus

Have You Noticed the Chesterfieldian Courtesy of Subway Train Employees Since the Company Issued the "Politeness Circulars" to its Guards? Panhandle Pete Has—and Cecil Has—but Nobody Else of any Consequence that We Have Heard From.

